

Dear E&T Committee clerk Energy & Tech Comm Energy & Tech Comm,

Dear Senator Needleman, Representative Arconti, and members of the Energy and Technology Committee,

Please advance a Green New Deal for Connecticut by supporting Proposed Bill 5002.

It is clear that very little action will be taken at the federal level to address climate change. BUT there is so much we can do at the local level. We need to stop waiting for the federal government to save us and to do what we can to get our own local house in order. We can, and must step up to not only meet, but exceed the Paris Agreement and do everything we can to save our state for future generations. Connecticut has an unprecedented opportunity to radically transform EVERYTHING and make our future better. As a parent and an educator, in my opinion there is nothing more important than addressing climate change and building a carbon neutral Connecticut.

I ask the Committee to fully draft and support Green New Deal legislation that will achieve this vision by:

- Regaining the confidence of small businesses and saving money for working families by restoring the Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy funds and protecting ratepayer funds from future budget raids. We need more investment in our energy infrastructure at the state level and we need to protect the funds designated for this.
- Rapidly increasing use of solar and offshore wind and ensuring clean energy's benefits are accessible for low and middle income families. Let's put a solar panel on every roof that can carry one. Start with all state owned buildings, require all the big box stores (with their big flat roofs) to put solar on their buildings and subsidize solar panels for low income families. If we invest properly we can get off fossil fuels in 10 years. Once businesses get used to free electricity they will see the benefit, but we're going to have to push them to get there by regulating and requiring it.
- Upgrading coastal infrastructure to prepare for storms and sea level rise, including use of marshes, dunes, and rain gardens to prevent flooding and buffer waves. Metronorth train lines are probably particularly vulnerable.
- Making it easier for residents and businesses to adopt zero-emission vehicles, and investing in Connecticut's bus and rail systems. I live in Middletown and you can't get anywhere from here on public transportation - its a huge problem for our student population. And at the local level, bike trails so that more people can get healthy and commute or run errands by bike. High school students could bike to school. It'll be awesome.
- Generating high-quality employment for tens of thousands of Connecticut residents through a solar jobs training program, infrastructure investments, and community workforce agreements to hire from disadvantaged communities. Lets put people to work building a cleaner, greener tomorrow!

Climate change is scary and seems daunting, but for our kids' sakes we have to try. We can't pinch pennies and cut corners - the stakes are literally life or death. We need bold decisive action that will shape the future of our state for the next century. And we, the voters and taxpayers of Connecticut, will remember whether you voted for a green future or for despair.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Prof. Justine Quijada

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